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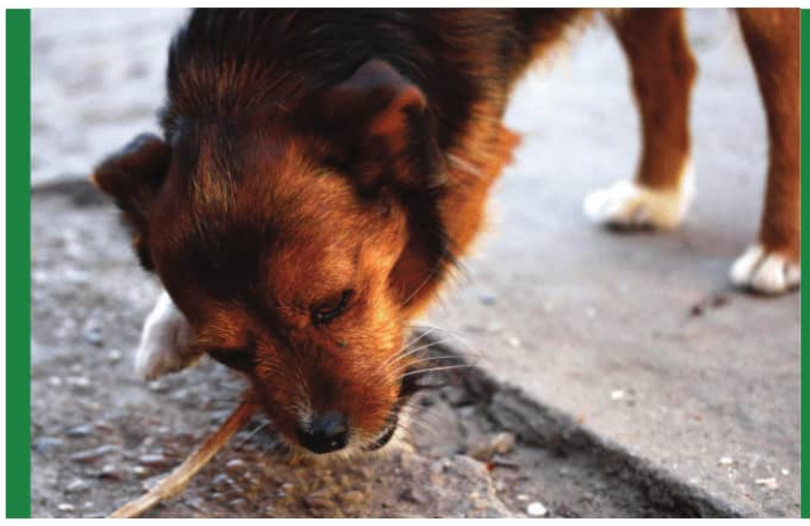
Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 28 | Min 21 | Humidity 67% Light rain Sensex 82,500 | Nifty 25,149 | Gold 97,628 | Silver 1,11,873 | Dollar 85.74 | Euro 100.29 | GBP 116.19



LIVE & LET LIVE

Dog feeders make plea for protection as they face resistance or hostility from citizens opposed to feeding strays

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LANE IN VAIN

As metro construction work nears end, commuters say it is time to bring back Outer Ring Road's bus lane

PAGE 5

₹1,26,28,000 to fix electric crematorium in Wilson Garden — an estimate that has gone through the roof or just 'as per requirements to prevent frequent shutdowns'? Contractors allege inexperienced parties given project

TAKE A TENDER, JUST RUN WITH IT

Similar work was done in B'luru Rural for Rs 20 lakh lesser

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If the alleged overestimation of civil and mechanical works at Wilson Garden Crematorium is any indication, it seems some of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) engineers and so-called contractors like to go overboard.

The electric crematorium is the last option for people who have no means to cremate bodies in traditional methods by using firewood. There are more than 10 electric crematoriums in Bengaluru at different locations to ensure a dignified final send-off. Some of the electric crematoria are not in good condition and replacement of furnaces, chimney, and other equipment is needed. For installing the furnace and chimney, the contractor has to take up civil works (foundation for furnace and chimney) and mechanical works such as furnace, chimney, electric equipment.

Had the BBMP Executive Engineers in-charge of electric crematoriums engaged qualified

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

KAUSHIK JN

"We are installing vertical coils to avoid frequent shutdown of furnaces at Wilson Garden Electric Crematorium. The contractor, who has taken up the civil and mechanical works, has a lot of experience

—BBMP executive engineer

Is your passengers' lives worth this call?

BMTC to crack down on violations such as drivers speaking on the phone, failing to halt at designated stops, using earphones

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The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has stepped up its inspection drive across the city, placing several common violations under strict scrutiny. From ticketless travel and loud music to more serious breaches like drivers speaking on the phone or failing to halt at designated stops, the enforcement net is widening as part of BMTC's aggressive push to restore discipline in public transport.

According to the inspection schedule for the second quarter of 2025, BMTC conducted a total of 56,834 bus trip inspections between April and June. During this period, 9,068 ticketless passengers were caught and fined, and 5,112 cases were officially booked, amounting to ₹20.3 lakh in penalties collected.

A month-wise breakdown of BMTC's intensified inspection drive shows a consistent enforcement effort across the second quarter of 2025. In April, a total of 19,044 trips were inspected, leading to 2,855 passengers being caught without tickets, 1,782 cases booked, and ₹6.65 lakh in penalties collected. The momentum continued into May, with 19,072 trips inspected,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Unique display

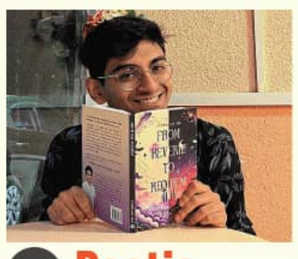
Karnataka Numismatic Society is presenting 'NanyaDarshini 2025', an exhibition showcasing rare and antique coins, currency notes, stamps, medals, and related collectibles. **Where: Shikshaka Sadana, Nagarathpete; When: July 11 to 13**

02 Lockdown stories

NGMA, in collaboration with Ananya Drishya, are organising the video screening of nine artists shot during the covid lockdown, sharing their work progress and methodology. **Where: National Gallery of Modern Art, Palace Road; When: July 12, 5 pm**

03 Artistic tribute

Natanam School of Dance, under the guidance of Dr Raksha, is presenting 'Acharya Devo Bhava', a Bharatanatyam performance that seeks to honour the gurus who illuminate the path of knowledge, devotion, and discipline. **Where: Vyoma Artspace, JP Nagar; When: July 13, 5 pm**



04 Poetic escape

Poet Subbaiah Nuchimanyanda Muthanna will join Sid Chengappa in a conversation about his poetry collection, 'From Reverie to Requiem'—a stirring compilation of 22 poems exploring life's contradictions. **Where: MyBoTree, Koramangala; When: July 12, 4 pm to 6 pm**

05 Wizard wisdom

Nexus Whitefield Mall is presenting 'Science of Wizards', an experiential fest that blends the enchantment of wizardry with the wonders of science through hands-on experiments, interactive zones, and magical demonstrations, making learning both fun and unforgettable. **Where: Nexus Whitefield Mall; When: July 12 and 13, 11 am to 8 pm**

Teachers instructed to curb mobile use during assemblies

Move aimed at bringing down unrestrained phone usage amongst children, as part of focused strategy to raise academic outcomes while addressing behavioural and emotional well-being of students

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During morning assemblies, both teachers and principals must lead by example by limiting their own mobile phone usage, according to new directives from the education department. The move is aimed at discouraging excessive screen time amongst students and fostering an academic-focused environment.

As part of a broader initiative to enhance Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) exam performance, the department has asked teachers to caution students at least twice a week on the ill effects of excessive mobile phone usage and gaming addiction. Students should be regularly motivated to concentrate on their studies and maintain discipline in their daily routines, as per the new directives. The guidelines also urge schools to emphasise the importance of a nutritious diet and encourage students to adopt a balanced lifestyle. The entire SSLC syllabus must be completed by December, in accordance with the academic calendar. To support early morning study habits, teachers and headmasters have been instructed to make daily 'wake-up calls' to students to check on their preparedness.

To reduce academic stress, schools have been instructed to allocate at least one class period per week to sports and physical activity. Dieticians have been asked to provide structured health plans, and officials are to visit schools five days a week and participate in remedial classes. All such activities must be regularly updated on the state's digital education monitoring system. These directives are part of the department's focused strategy to raise academic outcomes while addressing the behavioural and emotional well-being of students.

Through the new directives, the department aims to improve the state's dropping SSLC results (File photo)

Year-end syllabus completion

In a bid to improve SSLC annual exam results, the Department of School Education and Literacy has issued a directive mandating all schools to complete the SSLC syllabus by the end of December. The department has also emphasised the need to start special classes from July, before regular school hours.

Department has asked teachers to caution students at least twice a week on the ill effects of excessive mobile phone usage and gaming addiction

To enhance students' writing skills, schools have been instructed to conduct weekly answer-writing sessions based on subject-wise model question papers after school hours. Students should be grouped into three categories — below average, average, and above average — with teachers assigned to mentor them individually, ensuring focused academic support. Another key directive includes completion of preparatory exams by January and February. Examinations should be monitored via webcasting for transparency. Officials have been told to visit schools every Friday for supervision and special attention should be given to schools that recorded zero results in the past.

To address absenteeism, the report recommended that schools must promote regular student attendance. If a student is absent for more than a week, a home visit is to be conducted to determine the reason and ensure their return. Special efforts are also mandated to bring dropouts back to school.

Underperforming schools to be monitored

Schools identified for underperformance should be adopted by officials at different administrative levels. These officials must pay regular visits, monitor teaching quality, and implement necessary improvements. Post-Dasara holidays, schools are required to conduct on-campus career guidance workshops. These workshops should familiarise students with various professional courses available after SSLC and II PUC, as outlined in the new guidelines, the directive added.

No fee hike for nursing courses this year

In a relief to students and parents, Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanprakash Patil has clarified that there will be no fee hike for nursing courses this academic year. He stated that the decision was made to ease the financial burden on students, particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds. Highlighting that most nursing students come from rural and underprivileged communities, the minister called any increase in fees unjust and unacceptable. The existing fee structure will continue—Rs 10,000 under the government quota, Rs 1 lakh for other quotas, and Rs 1.4 lakh for non-Karnataka students. He warned that colleges charging beyond the approved fees will face strict legal action, including possible cancellation of recognition. Karnataka currently has 611 nursing colleges offering around 35,000 seats, with 80% filled through the board and 20% under the government quota. The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) Director H Prasanna has been instructed to ensure compliance and prevent any unauthorised changes in seat allocation. **— BMB**

20% hike in Bannerghatta & Mysuru Zoo entry fees approved

The Karnataka Zoo Authority, in its 159th board meeting chaired by Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Thursday, approved a 20 per cent hike in entry fees for the Bannerghatta Biological Park and Mysuru's Chamarajendra Zoo. The proposal was tabled in view of rising maintenance costs and increased staff salaries. Though officials initially suggested a 50 per cent hike, the minister rejected the steep increase and approved a more moderate 20 per cent revision. **— BMB**

Medical milestone

The team at Medicover Hospitals, Whitefield unit, celebrated the milestone of 100 successful robotic surgeries; Seen in the photo: Hospital Head Krishna Murthy, Dr Pramod (Urologist), Dr Javed Hussain (General Surgeon), Dr Kaushik Subramanian (Gastroenterologist), Dr Manasa Reddy (Gynaecologist), Dr Sabiha (Gynaecologist), Dr Samskruthi Reddy (Gynaecologist), and Marketing Head Pramod U, along with the marketing and operation theatre staff

Bluru's backyard jamuns take flight to London

In For the first time ever, fresh jamun (Indian blackberry) grown in the backyards of Bengaluru and surrounding districts have been exported to London, earning a spot on the global map. Traditionally known for their rich nutritional and medicinal value—especially for managing blood sugar, boosting vitamin C and iron levels, and aiding skin health—these glossy purple fruits have now entered the international market owing to the efforts by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

The initiative, supported by Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), allows growers to supply fresh produce directly to APEDA, which then grades and exports it. While farmers in Karnataka were receiving Rs 60 per kg in local markets, exports fetched them up to Rs 110 per kg. This move marks a significant step in showcasing Karnataka's traditional fruits globally, with demand even coming from other Indian states like Andhra Pradesh. **— BMB**

Feeding dogs, facing threats: Who will act?

Despite growing awareness on reducing dog bites, feeders face threats, prompting calls for better protection and civic action

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Animal activists have welcomed the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) initiative to feed around 5,000 street dogs with nutritious food at an annual cost of ₹2.88 crore. However, they have also raised concerns about the lack of adequate security for dog feeders, who often face resistance or hostility from residents opposed to feeding strays.

Despite growing awareness that feeding stray dogs can help reduce dog bites, some residents in various parts of the city continue to confront and harass those providing food to the animals. The hapless feeders have to run pillar to post, including making several visits to the jurisdictional police station, seeking protection for themselves as well as the animals.

Bangalore Mirror published a story, "13 booked for alleged poisoning of street dog," on July 4, narrating how a feeder found a dog dead under suspicious circumstances and how Puttenahalli police have registered an FIR against 13 residents of Omkarnagar for allegedly poisoning the dog.

"My wife and I have been feeding around 40 stray dogs in Bommanahalli, Omkarnagar and other areas. We used to face a lot of problems from the residents for feeding stray dogs. Now, they are not troubling us. I want the authorities to create awareness among the public on the importance of feeding stray dogs to reduce dog bite incidents," said Govindaraj, a dog feeder.

The latest incident of harassment took place at 8th Cross, Nanjareddy Colony, near Murugeshpalya in Jeevan Bhima Nagar Police Station limits. The residents not only blamed Selin C, a dog feeder, for dog bites in the locality but also threatened her not to feed dogs in the locality. "The residents have attacked dogs with logs. They do not want me to feed the dogs. Now, I have changed the timings of feeding dogs from 7.30 pm to 11 pm, and it will take me two to three hours to feed around 40 dogs on Shri Durgaparameshwari Temple Road and nearby areas," said Selin.

Selin added that it is not safe for her to feed dogs at midnight. "I take help from my husband or my daughter, but they cannot accompany me on all days. I have appealed to the residents to allow us to feed the dogs, but in vain. I urge the BBMP authorities to create awareness among the residents and also to enable me to feed dogs without any hassles," she said.

Selin C feeds stray dogs at Nanjareddy Colony around midnight

Stating that empathy for nature and all living creatures is a sacred duty enshrined in the Constitution, Nevina Kamath, Secretary, Action for Animal Justice, said, "Harassment, assault and abuse are the regular issues being faced by all caretakers, with very little support or protection offered by the custodian of such animals, namely the BBMP."

"Feeders need to be classed in the same category as frontline health or social workers, as it's mainly through their efforts that the much suffering street dogs are kept in good health, socialised, vaccinated and sterilised, so that a robust Animal Birth Control program can be in place with all it's attendant benefits for the entire society at large," Kamath said.

Kamath added, "One would imagine that after 65 years of the PCA Act (Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act) and 24 years of ABC (Animal Birth Control) Rules, some strong measures would have been in place to protect the rights of Feeders and their wards. But all we hear of is continuing episodes of grievous attacks by animal haters, with an inadequate response from the officials in most cases.

Meanwhile, Dr MH Reddy, Assistant Director (Animal Husbandry), said that he has conducted an awareness programme at HAL 2nd Stage recently. "I will visit the spot to organise an awareness programme at Nanjareddy Colony shortly," he said.

SC survey stickers go waste

Stickers worth ₹25 lakh printed for the Scheduled Caste (SC) household survey in Bengaluru have gone unused, raising concerns over resource wastage. Out of 35 lakh stickers printed at a cost of ₹87 lakh, only 24 lakh were affixed to households, leaving 11 lakh stickers unutilised.

The SC household survey, aimed at streamlining the implementation of internal reservation, was launched across Karnataka on May 6 and extended twice until July 6. Despite the extended timeline, survey teams in Bengaluru achieved only 76% of the target based on 2011 Census data and just 54% when compared to the projected population for 2025.

According to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), 32.47 lakh households were surveyed across the city, with 1.95 lakh SC households covered and data collected. These SC households account for 7.22 lakh individuals. The highest concentration of SC families was found in the East, West, and South zones of the city. BBMP spent ₹3.6 crore overall on the awareness and execution of the survey. The SC household survey in Bengaluru achieved 76% coverage based on 2011 Census data and only 54% as per 2025 estimates, with zones like RR Nagar topping at 89% and Mahadevapura lagging at 70%. **-BMB**

6 school bus drivers caught drunk at wheel

Bengaluru City Police, along with RTO officials, carried out a special drive to check school vehicles in the North Traffic Division on Friday.

The drive took place between 6 am and 9 am and involved checking 771 vehicles that were transporting school children. During the inspection, six drivers were caught for drunk driving, and 10 vehicles were seized. The RTO also issued 45 notices for various violations, including missing permits and not following safety rules.

Officials said the drive was meant to make sure school transport operators follow the law and ensure children's safety. With growing concerns about unregulated school vans and unsafe travel conditions, the authorities made it clear that strict action will be taken against any carelessness on the roads. **-BMB**

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Work in progress, business in regress on Platform Road

Pedestrians, motorists, and shop owners face daily struggles as utility work delays drag on near Seshadripuram, choking public access and footfall

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The delay in completing developmental works on Platform Road near Seshadripuram is causing major inconvenience. Pedestrians are forced to walk on the road due to blocked footpaths, while motorists struggle with frequent traffic jams. Local businessmen have also reported losses as customer footfall drops. Residents are urging authorities to speed up the work and restore normalcy.

A major portion of Platform Road has been dug up for utility shifting, significantly narrowing the stretch between the Central Junction and the traffic signal near Krishna Flour Mills. As a result, the road frequently witnesses traffic jams. Commuters report that it now takes over 5 to 10 minutes to cover just a few hundred meters, adding to daily frustration and delays in this already congested part of the city.

Many people who own shops, including hotels and condiment shops, have incurred loss with not many customers visiting their shops. "My business has come down. I hope the authorities will complete the ongoing developmental works without further delay and complete the asphalting or white topping for the benefit of motorists, pedestrians and shop owners," said Parameshwar Adiga, a shop owner.

Dug-up Platform Road narrows stretch near Krishna Flour Mills, causing major traffic snarls

He said that it was very inconvenient for him to open the shop one month ago due to dumping of mud and digging of the road in front of his shop. "Now, it is a little better. I want the BBMP authorities to ensure the contractor completes the work on time," he added.

Expressing concern over the delay in completing the development of the road, Ravi H, who owns Vaishnavi Condiments Shop, said that he lost 20 percent of customers due to the ongoing developmental works. "I am not in a position to advise the BBMP authorities to expedite the ongoing developmental works. I wanted the authorities to ensure no delay in completing the road work. It will be a great help for small businessmen like me if the road work is completed as early as possible," said Ravi.

> **"My business has come down. I hope the authorities complete the work soon—for the benefit of motorists, pedestrians, and shop owners** – Parameshwar Adiga, a shop owner

Expressing the similar opinion, Kumar, a cashier at All About Liquor, said the footfalls have come down drastically due to the ongoing digging and deterioration of the road. "We have lost many customers, especially those who come on two-wheelers and four-wheelers. There is hardly any space for parking vehicles on this stretch due to the digging of the road. I hope the BBMP authorities will complete the work without any further delay," said Kumar. However, the BBMP Executive Engineer was not available for comment.

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Footpath encroachment

Jayanagar

New pushcarts have taken over the footpath opposite Satya Medicals on 36th Cross, 4th T Block, Jayanagar. Despite multiple complaints to BBMP, no action has been taken, forcing pedestrians onto the road.

Booth blockage

Sevanaga

Ironically undermining the 'Safe City' vision, a police booth near Orion Avenue, Sevanagar is blocking the footpath, compelling pedestrians to step into fast-moving traffic.

Cost of civil, mechanical works overestimated, claim contractors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

contractors and prepared an estimation of the cost as per the norms, there would have been no issue. But that would be wishful thinking. It is alleged that a few executive engineers, in collusion with contractors, often overestimate the cost of the civil and mechanical works of the electric crematoriums. Take for instance a tender floated by the BBMP Executive Engineer (Project South) inviting bidders to take up mechanical and civil works at Wilson Garden Electric Crematorium. The tender was floated on October 8, 2024. The total cost of the civil works are estimated at Rs 68,88,000 and mechanical works are estimated at Rs 57,40,000. The total amount is Rs 1,26,28,000. It is alleged that the total cost of the both works (civil and mechanical) should not add up to more than Rs 1 crore. It is said the Executive Engineer has overestimated the cost by more than Rs 20 lakh and that can be termed as nothing but a waste of tax-payers' money.

However, BBMP Executive Engineer Fazal Ahmed told BM the estimation for the civil and mechanical works was done as per the requirements. "We are installing vertical coils to avoid frequent shutdown of furnaces at Wilson Garden Electric Crematorium. The contractor, who has taken up the civil and mechanical works, has a lot of experience," the executive engineer said.

Meanwhile, a contractor engaged in similar works, said that he had installed furnaces and chimneys in Bengaluru Rural and the Director of Municipal Administration approved his proposal of Rs 6,952,715 (excluding GST). The amount (Rs 6,952,715) is for mechanical works and the civil works (laying foundation for furnaces and chimney) will cost Rs 10 or Rs 15 lakh. So, the total cost will be Rs 80 lakh or Rs 90 lakh (excluding the GST).

"The estimation for the mechanical and civil works is overestimated by more than Rs 20 lakh for Wilson Garden Electric Crematorium," said a contractor. It is alleged that BBMP engineers failed to identify qualified contractors to allocate the civil and mechanical work. A few contractors alleged that the BBMP engineers prefer unqualified contractors due to reasons only known to them. "One of the contractors, who got most of the contracts of electric crematoriums, is a civil contractor. He does not have the expertise in mechanical work," said a contractor pleading anonymity.

It is alleged that BBMP Executive Engineer (Projects - West) had rejected the bid of an experienced contractor for installing a furnace at Harishchandra Ghat Electric Crematorium in December 2023 on the basis that the contractor failed to submit the copy of licence. The said contractor is known for installing furnaces at various electric crematoriums in the city and also in Bengaluru Rural.

June records highest monthly fines so far this year with over ₹7 lakh collected

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

2,851 ticketless commuters fined, 1,718 cases registered, and ₹6.63 lakh collected in penalties. June recorded the highest monthly fines so far this year, 18,718 trips were checked, 3,362 passengers were penalised for travelling without tickets, 1,612 cases were filed, and ₹7.06 lakh was collected.

More violations in focus

Beyond ticketless travel, BMTC has tightened its grip on other pressing concerns, bus drivers speaking on the phone while driving, failing to stop at designated bus stops, leaving doors open while in motion, and allowing or playing loud music inside buses. The use of earphones by drivers, a safety risk, has also been flagged as a violation. Commuters are being urged to refrain from playing music on mobile phones, and signage reinforcing these rules is being placed across the fleet.

"There's a renewed push for accountability, especially among conductors and drivers. The inspection teams have been instructed to take swift action wherever needed," said a senior BMTC official. The official also noted that instances of drivers using earphones while on duty and playing loud music inside buses have been reported during recent checks. "Such behaviour poses a serious risk to passenger safety, and strict action will be taken against anyone found violating these norms," the official added.

The crackdown also reflects a larger shift in BMTC's monitoring strategy, with digital tools increasingly being deployed to track violations and staff performance. Smart card integration, UPI ticketing, and automated fare systems are part of this transformation, aimed not just at curbing revenue loss, but improving operational transparency. Though officials acknowledge that the drive has led to better discipline on many routes, they also admit that enforcement in peripheral and suburban areas still needs strengthening. For Bengaluru's 45 lakh daily public transport users, the hope is that this sustained inspection push will lead to cleaner, safer, and more respectful commutes.

Bike taxi ban: Even aggregation is business, Uber tells HC

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In an ongoing legal dispute at the Karnataka High Court, Uber India presented arguments against the state's ban on bike taxis. The company maintained that if motorcycles can legally function as taxis, restricting their aggregation lacks justification.

Before Acting Chief Justice V Kameswar Rao and Justice CM Joshi, the company emphasised that aggregators are essential for providing last-mile connectivity and convenience, potentially alleviating traffic congestion.

Senior Advocate Srinivasa Raghavan, representing the aggregator, argued that current legal structures allow both the operation and aggregation of two-wheelers for commercial purposes. He stated that the State's position contradicts consumer interests.

Raghavan firmly stated that the State Government lacks authority under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 or the Constitution to prohibit bike taxis. He asserted that licensing rights do not depend on state-framed rules.

"I am entitled to my right to do business, even aggregation is business," he argued. Discussing Section 93 of the Motor Vehicles Act regarding aggregator licensing, he noted its inclusion of two-wheelers.

He highlighted that the previous e-bike policy recognised electric bikes' potential for public transport and permitted their aggregation.

Restricting bike taxi aggregation is unjustified, company argues

Contesting the State's stance, Raghavan argued that despite the e-bike scheme's repeal, the state cannot now claim motorcycles are ineligible for transport vehicle registration and permits.

He contested that no formal policy decision banned bike taxis, arguing that reliance on a committee report for the ban was inappropriate.

"Sec 93 under the MV Act prescribes a license for an aggregator, and rules have been framed which include motor cabs, and it includes motorcycles, and even the E-bike scheme contemplated it. State accepted that motorcycles can be used as transport vehicles and are to be used for last-mile connectivity," he stated.

Raghavan questioned the Transport Department's dismissal of the 2019 expert committee report supporting bike taxi regulation. He maintained that the e-bike scheme's withdrawal doesn't invalidate the framework for motorcycle aggregation.

The High Court enquired about yellow board requirements for individual bikes and commercial use of green board vehicles without permits. Raghavan responded:

"Requirement of permit is exempted for all e-bikes".

He maintained that allowing motorcycle taxis necessitates permitting aggregation, stating: It will help in last mile connectivity and convenience.

"To prevent aggregation is not in the interest of consumers, is my submission. A person buys ten bikes and engages riders; the aggregator helps in the process. If bike taxis are allowed, there is no logic in not allowing aggregators…it will help in last mile connectivity and convenience."

He added that bike taxis enable people to leave their vehicles, contributing to traffic reduction.

The court scheduled the state government's response for the next hearing.

High time ORR got its bus lane back

As metro construction work nears end, bus passengers urge govt to revive dedicated lanes that were set up in 2019 for faster and safer commute

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Regular bus passengers along he Outer Ring Road (ORR) are urging officials to restore the bus priority lane as metro construction work nears completion in the area.

Passengers suggest that bringing back the dedicated bus lane would benefit public transport users and promote a reduction in private vehicle usage.

The dedicated bus lane on ORR was established in 2019, covering 17 km from Central Silk Board to KR Pura, with an investment of Rs 14.3 crore. The construction of Blue line metro pillars in the road's centre required 9 metres of space, leading to the removal of lane-marking bollards in mid-2022. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had previously installed over 25,000 fibre-reinforced bollards on both sides to establish the bus lane. Though BBMP installed these bollards following Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) instructions, they transferred the removal responsibility to the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL).

A regular passenger on this route suggested reinstalling the bollards after consulting with BMRCL. "This would encourage more people to use buses due to reduced journey times," he said. The passenger also emphasised that various departments, including traffic police and local authorities, need to collaborate to prevent other vehicles from entering the bus lane and ensure proper road infrastructure.

A Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) representative previously told Bangalore Mirror that reinstating the bus lane would decrease journey times from 70 minutes to 50-55 minutes, saving 20 minutes of commute time.

Greenpeace India survey reveals 86% of participants support expanding the dedicated bus lane network

> **"A significant majority, around 40 lakh people travel by bus everyday. The job of city is to make their daily commute easy, convenient and fast**
> –Shaheen S, BBPV

Greenpeace India's research shows that 86 per cent of survey participants support expanding the bus lane network. The study reveals that 28 per cent of current bus users noticed improved journey times after the bus lane implementation. The impact was notably significant for long-distance travellers, with 54 per cent reporting reduced journey times from 60-90 minutes to 30-60 minutes. Furthermore, 82 per cent of participants reported positive experiences with the bus lanes.

"Bus lanes are the most critical infrastructure we need in the city today. If we need to invest in anything, it would be more buses and bus lanes. A significant majority, around 40 lakh people, travel by bus every day. The job of the city is to make their daily commute easy, convenient and fast," said Shaheen Shasa from Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike (BBPV).

"With a mere 6,000 odd buses plying in the city with a 1.4 crore population, vying for space on the road among lakhs of private vehicles, if we want to make public transport serve the ordinary working people and make it viable and attractive for a wider segment of the population, we want more buses and we want the bus lanes so those buses can get their due on the roads and our city can breathe better," she explained.

"The 20-km bus lane that was piloted on Outer Ring Road in 2019-20 led to an increase in ridership, reduction in travel time and trip completion within a short time. A citywide network of bus lanes can achieve these outcomes manifold for all of the city," she added.

What traffic police say

To truly promote public transport in a meaningful way, prioritising buses over private vehicles is essential. The reintroduction of dedicated bus priority lanes is a welcome and much-needed move, as it improves speed and efficiency by separating buses from regular traffic. While road space remains a constraint, especially with ongoing metro construction, there is still scope to implement these lanes in stretches where metro work is nearly complete, an official said while speaking to BM.

Given that congestion will continue to affect Outer Ring Road traffic in the near term, the bus lane can serve as a crucial bridge until the full metro network becomes operational. With proper frequency, BMTC buses can offer a quicker and more reliable alternative.

However, with metro construction still underway and roads already narrowed by barricades and pillars, the timing might be off. "Right now, the stretch between Marathahalli and Silk Board is already under immense pressure, especially during peak hours. Introducing a dedicated bus lane in such constrained space could worsen congestion," said sources in the traffic police department.

Officials from Bengaluru's East Division Traffic Police also clarified that no formal communication has been received from BMTC regarding any immediate rollout of bus priority lanes in this corridor. "As of now, there's no official intimation or plan shared with us on this," a senior officer confirmed.

TV actress stabbed by ex-husband

A Kannada television actress and anchor, Shruti, was allegedly stabbed by her former husband, Ambareesh, over suspicions of infidelity. The incident occurred on July 4 in Muneshwara Layout under the Hanumantha Nagar police station limits, but came to light recently.

Shruti had been married to Ambareesh for over 20 years and is a mother of two children. However, due to increasing marital discord and lack of compatibility, she had moved out and begun living at her brother's residence. The couple officially divorced in April this year.

According to sources, there were also financial disputes between the two regarding lease money, leading to a police complaint earlier. Despite attempts at reconciliation on July 3, the situation escalated violently the following day. On July 4, after their children had left for college, Ambareesh allegedly visited Shruti's residence, sprayed her with pepper spray, and attacked her with a knife. Shruti has filed a complaint with the Hanumantha Nagar police. **–BMB**

Home buyer alleges fraud by bank

A complaint alleging fraud in a property auction deal has been filed by VC Gopala Reddy, son of Deputy Commissioner of Police (CAR West) VC Vitthal Reddy, with the Bengaluru Police Commissioner's Office. According to the complaint, the property located at FF 403, Sri Shankara Meadows, in Kaggalipura Village was purchased for ₹28 lakh through an official auction conducted by Jana Small Finance Bank on July 24, 2023. The complainant had availed of a loan from the Bank of Baroda to purchase the property. However, on May 8, the property was seized by Swarna Bharathi Cooperative Bank without prior notice. Upon further inquiry with Jana Small Finance Bank officials, identified as Rajesh, Babu Sreejith, Umesh, and Ranjan, it was revealed that the property had an existing loan with Swarna Bharathi Cooperative Bank, which was never disclosed to the buyer. **–BMB**

City investors chase farmland for returns, reboot

With soaring real estate prices and shrinking green spaces within Bengaluru's city limits, more urban investors are looking beyond traditional properties and turning to farmland. Once seen as a sentimental or retirement investment, it has now emerged as a lucrative, sustainable asset—offering long-term returns, weekend retreats, and a deeper connection to nature.

Developers and aggregators report a significant uptick in interest from IT professionals, entrepreneurs, and even NRIs. The key reasons: affordability compared to city plots, potential for high appreciation, and the growing allure of farm living. Many projects now offer managed farmland—complete with drip irrigation, plantations, farmhouses, and legal assistance for land conversion—removing traditional hurdles.

"Farmland was once limited to agriculturists or rural buyers, but in the last 3–5 years, over 70% of our buyers are from Bengaluru's urban pockets," says Sandeep Reddy, co-founder of a leading agro-realty firm. "What makes it appealing is the mix of financial returns and emotional value. Our clients aren't just investing—they're reconnecting with their roots."

Areas around Kanakapura, Doddaballapur, Chikkaballapur, Tumakuru Road, and Mysuru Road have emerged as prime investment hotspots.

With improving infrastructure—such as satellite towns, highways, and Namma Metro Phase II—these regions are becoming increasingly accessible, making them ideal for both capital appreciation and weekend retreats.

Rohini V, a 38-year-old HR professional who recently bought a one-acre plot says, "We always dreamed of a quiet space close to nature. Initially, it felt overwhelming because of legal complexities and title issues, but the new managed farmland providers took care of everything. It's now a place we visit every other weekend, and the land value has already appreciated by 25%."

Analysts note that unlike city flats that depreciate, farmland holds and often gains value—especially in growth corridors.

A Knight Frank report highlights a 20% year-on-year rise in demand for agricultural land near Bengaluru, driven by lifestyle shifts and investors seeking to diversify their portfolios.

"The hybrid work culture post-COVID, wellness-oriented lifestyles, and rising awareness of sustainable living are driving this shift," says real estate consultant Ravi Prakash.

"People are moving away from owning dead assets in the city to acquiring living assets—land that breathes, produces, and appreciates."

From mango orchards to organic farms and weekend cottages, Bengaluru's new-age investors are sowing the seeds for a greener, wealthier future. "Farmland is no longer just a piece of land—it's peace of mind," adds Reddy. "And in a nonstop city, that's becoming priceless."

–Prakash VL

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Luxury homes lead as market waits to rebound

The Indian housing market saw a significant slump in Q2 2025, with sales across the top seven cities falling by 20% year-on-year to 96,285 units, down from 1,20,335 units in Q2 2024, according to ANAROCK Research. However, there was a slight 3% quarter-on-quarter increase from Q1 2025.

The decline was largely attributed to global geopolitical tensions, including Operation Sindoor and the Iran-Israel conflict, which prompted many homebuyers to adopt a cautious, wait-and-watch approach during the quarter.

Despite the slowdown, Bengaluru stood out with a steady performance. The city recorded a 1% increase in housing sales compared to the previous quarter, showcasing resilience amid the broader market turbulence. While year-on-year (Y-o-Y) sales declined by 4%, Bengaluru's relatively stable numbers point to a cautiously optimistic market sentiment in the IT capital.

New launches drop; premium homes dominate city's supply

New residential launches across the top cities declined by 16% year-on-year, dropping from 1,17,165 units in Q2 2024 to 98,625 units in Q2 2025, with a marginal 1% dip quarter-on-quarter. Bengaluru saw a sharp 26% quarterly drop in new launches—down to 15,345 units in Q2 2025 from 20,855 in Q1.

Bengaluru recorded a strong 12% annual price rise, second only to NCR's steep 27% spike in residential property values

The city also recorded a 4% annual decline in supply. Significantly, around 92% of Bengaluru's new launches were in the premium and luxury segments (above ₹80 lakh), highlighting a growing developer tilt toward affluent homebuyers and high-end market preferences.

Luxury segment drives supply trends

The report highlights a continued tilt toward high-value housing. Luxury and ultra-luxury homes (priced above ₹1.5 crore) accounted for 46% of the new supply across the top cities.

This was followed by the mid-segment (₹40 lakh to ₹80 lakh) and premium segment (₹80 lakh to ₹1.5 crore), each contributing 21% of the total new launches. Affordable housing (below ₹40 lakh) made up just 12% of the overall supply, reflecting the shifting market dynamics and evolving buyer preferences.

Property prices climb, Bengaluru among top gainers

Average residential property prices in the top seven cities rose by 11% annually, with just a 1% increase over the previous quarter. Among the top performers, Bengaluru saw a robust 12% Y-o-Y jump in prices, second only to NCR which saw a massive 27% spike. Hyderabad followed with an 11% rise.

According to ANAROCK Chairman Anuj Puri, "Bengaluru's strong price growth underlines sustained demand in its prime micro-markets, particularly for premium homes. If prices are kept in check and home loan rates remain favourable, we can expect a pickup in sales activity in the months ahead."

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

SPARROW SIGHTING DELIGHT

Our reader shares a heartwarming image of a sparrow pair nestled inside an old horse stable in Kerkalmatti village, Bagalkot. The delightful sighting, along with the presence of numerous sparrows in the area, brought immense joy to these Bengalureans reminding them of a time when the cheerful chirping of sparrows was a part of daily life, before the birds gradually disappeared from the cityscape.

The picture was clicked by reader
NJ Ravi Chander

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Union Minister writes to PWD Minister over NICE Road toll hike

Shobha Karandlaje urges Minister Jarkiholi to step in and ensure toll policies are transparent and fair to commuters

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Union Minister of State for MSMEs Shobha Karandlaje has written to Karnataka's Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Satish Jarkiholi, expressing strong concern over the recent 15% hike in toll charges on the NICE Road. The revised toll rates came into effect from July 1, 2025, and have impacted all categories of vehicles plying on the stretch.

In her letter, Karandlaje described the hike as "arbitrary and burdensome," particularly for daily commuters who rely on the corridor to connect key areas such as Banashankari, Tavarekere, and Electronic City. She warned that the increase not only places a financial strain on motorists but could also trigger a cascading effect on BMTC bus fares along the route. Karandlaje criticised the lack of infrastructure improvements despite annual toll collections. "The NICE Road still lacks basic safety features like proper road markings, reflective tiles at accident-prone zones, clear signage, and CCTV cameras," she said.

The minister also highlighted the absence of same-day return discounts and daily passes—facilities that are commonly available on National Highways to support regular users. She questioned whether due process had been followed by NICE authorities and sought clarification on whether state government approval was obtained before the new rates were implemented.

> **"Despite collecting tolls, NICE Road lacks essential safety infrastructure like markings, reflective tiles, clear signage, and CCTV cameras**
> – Shobha Karandlaje, State Union Minister for MSME

Calling for an urgent review, Karandlaje urged Minister Jarkiholi to step in and ensure toll policies are transparent and fair to commuters. The toll hike has sparked outrage among regular users, who say frequent revisions are becoming unaffordable. "It is not just a 15% hike it's the sixth in six years. My toll expense is now higher than my fuel bill," said Ravindra Hegde, a commuter between Kengeri and Hosur Road.

"There's no relief for daily users. National highways offer return discounts and passes. Why can't NICE Road do the same?" asked Anitha Prasad, a tech worker headed to Electronic City.

Suresh Nayak, a delivery vehicle driver, added "The roads lights are dim at night and potholes return every monsoon. What exactly are we paying for?"

Frequent users demand return-trip discounts, monthly passes, and proper lighting on the NICE corridor

DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, monsoon rains from June to September bring relief and vital irrigation to South Asia. But climate change is making these rains more erratic and intense, leading to deadly floods and long dry spells. In 2024 alone, nearly 1,300 people died in India due to rain-related disasters. Experts warn that rising temperatures are also accelerating glacier melt in the Himalayas, causing floods and landslides. The region traditionally experiences two monsoon seasons, but warmer air now holds more moisture, dumping it all at once. Cities face flash floods as drainage systems get overwhelmed, and farming suffers with irregular rainfall and droughts—impacting over 60% of South Asia's agriculture-reliant population. Glaciers in the Hindu Kush and Himalayas are melting rapidly. At least 200 glacial lakes are at risk of overflowing, especially during heavy monsoons. The 2023 Sikkim flood, triggered by a glacial lake breach, killed 55 people. Experts call for early warning systems, better urban planning, and climate-resilient policies. But the ultimate solution, they stress, is reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit extreme weather and protect communities from future devastation. — AP

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No, weather modification did not cause the deadly flash floods in Texas

CLAIM: A July 2 cloud seeding operation by Rainmaker Technology Corporation caused flash floods in Texas Hill Country during the holiday weekend.
THE FACTS: This is false. Experts confirm that cloud seeding, which enhances existing clouds, cannot create major storms or floods. Rain was forecast for the area prior to July 2, and the region is already flood-prone. "The claim that cloud seeding played a role in this tragic event is complete nonsense," said Andrew Dessler, director of Texas A&M's Texas Centre for Extreme Weather.

As authorities search for victims of the flash floods in Texas that killed more than 100 people over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, social media users are spreading false claims that the devastation was caused by weather modification. Many have pointed to cloud seeding performed on July 2 by a California-based company as the cause. However, officials and experts say there is no evidence linking the floods to cloud seeding and emphasize that the process cannot generate this level of precipitation. Dev Niyogi, a professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said it is "extremely unlikely" that cloud seeding played a role. He pointed to weather conditions—moisture flow, widespread rainfall, and forecasts of heavy rain over a broad area—as the true cause.

Sen. Ted Cruz said at a briefing that "to the best of my knowledge, there is zero evidence of anything related to anything like weather modification." He added, "The internet is a strange place. People can come up with all sorts of crazy theories."

Still, online speculation grew. One post read: "Well … this is weird … A company called Rainmaker conducted a cloud seeding mission on July 2 over Texas Hill Country. Two days later, the worst flood in their history occurred … in the exact same area."

Some users also cited Rainmaker's ties to billionaire Peter Thiel, co-founder of Palantir Technologies. In 2024, Thiel's foundation awarded a $100,000 fellowship to Rainmaker founder Augustus Doricko.

Cloud seeding uses artificial particles like silver iodide to encourage precipitation in existing clouds. The process is often unpredictable and rarely results in significant rainfall. Dessler noted that it may produce "very modest increases," but cannot generate storms from scratch.

Ken Leppert, an atmospheric science professor at the University of Louisiana Monroe, said it had "absolutely nothing" to do with the floods. "It doesn't work by helping to create a cloud or storm that doesn't already exist." Texas Hill Country is naturally susceptible to flash floods. The Guadalupe River rose nearly a foot above its 93-year record. Doricko said Rainmaker did not operate in the area on July 3 or 4. Its last operation on July 2 targeted eastern south-central Texas and was suspended the same day due to high moisture. — AP

Ganapathy bows out after 945 wins, Mystical Dubai glory

From Sandawar to Mystical, veteran trainer Subbiah Ganapathy retires after revolutionising Indian racing with dedication, grit, and global wins

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A master at the art of training, Subbiah Ganapathy, the affable trainer who put India on the international racing map, the legendary Mystical winning twice in the Dubai Racing Carnival, has called it a day.

Ganapathy, 75, brought the curtain down on a remarkable career that spanned nearly 25 years, during which he led in 945 winners. From the time he secured his trainer's license in November 2000 to his final day on July 13, 2025, he remained a towering figure in Indian racing, respected not just for his achievements but also for his humility and professionalism.

The Bangalore-based trainer described his journey as a fulfilling one, filled with both celebratory moments and tough days that demanded perseverance. "I enjoyed every moment, whether it was celebrating classic wins or staying calm and working hard when the chips were down," Ganapathy said.

His career took off on a dream note, with his very first winner Sandawar winning in his debut season. That start proved prophetic—he emerged as champion trainer that same year, saddling 44 winners. Over the next seven years, he would dominate the scene, winning the champion trainer title in both summer and winter seasons.

Ganapathy began his career as a private trainer for Dr MAM Ramaswamy, the iconic figure of Indian racing known affectionately as MAM. Under MAM's mentorship and with access to high-quality bloodstock from renowned breeding farms like Poonawalla, Usha and Kunigal, Ganapathy quickly honed his craft. "The boss trusted me with the best horses and I knew I had to deliver. God willing, I did," he said.

Top trainer S Ganapathy posing with Mystical

> **"I saddled my first winner, Sandawar, in my first season, starting a run for the roses**
> –Subbiah Ganapathy

A turning point in his career came when Zavaray Poonawalla, top administrator and head of Poonawalla Stud Farm, encouraged him to take Mystical, one of India's finest racehorses, to compete in Dubai. The result was historic—Mystical won twice at the Dubai Racing Carnival, making Ganapathy the first Indian trainer to triumph at the elite international event.

Reflecting on his journey, Ganapathy was generous in acknowledging the many who helped shape his success—from racing administrators like AC Muthiah and fellow trainers across the country to his steadfast supporters. Above all, he credited his wife Prema Ganapathy, whose unwavering support helped him weather the pressures of a high-stakes sport.

With the Summer Derby on Sunday—sponsored fittingly by Zavaray Poonawalla—Ganapathy felt it was the right time to step away. "It's the perfect occasion to bow out," he said, signing off with grace, just as he ran his career: with quiet dignity and a deep love for the sport.

Classic achievements of hall of fame trainer Subbiah Ganapathy

Licensed to Train: Winter Season, 2000

First Winner: Sandawar on November 5, 2000

First Classic Winner: Fantastic Belle – Bangalore Oaks, January 6, 2001

Champion Trainer:

- 44 winners in debut season (2001)
- Champion trainer title for 7 consecutive years (Summer & Winter seasons)

Poonawalla Breeders' Multi-Million:

- Winner in first season
- 5 wins total – most prestigious juvenile race in Mumbai

Record-Breaking Season:

- 44 winners in Bangalore Summer 2002 – unmatched feat

Career Tally (2000–2025):

Total Winners: 945
Classic Victories:
Derby Wins: 25
Indian Turf Invitation Cup: 4
1000 Guineas: 18
2000 Guineas: 16
Oaks: 12
St. Leger: 8
Fillies Trial Stakes: 9
Colts Trial Stakes: 6

Board, Corporation picks finalised

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday confirmed that the final round of appointments to remaining state boards and corporations will be decided on July 16 in Bengaluru.

Congress general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala is scheduled to visit the city that evening for key discussions before the list is finalised. Siddaramaiah, who spoke to reporters in New Delhi, said the initial round of talks with Surjewala—held on Thursday and attended by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar went smoothly.

"Surjewala will be in Bengaluru on July 16. We will finalise the list then," he said.

While most top posts in state-run bodies have already been filled mainly by legislators, several lower-level vacancies remain and are being addressed through ongoing recruitment.

Between June 2023 and January 2024, the government appointed 42 MLAs and MLCs as heads of various boards and corporations, granting them cabinet rank and perks moves seen as crucial for managing internal party dynamics. **–BMB**

B'luru ranks among top tech cities

Bengaluru has added yet another feather to its cap by securing a spot among the world's top 10 cities with the most experienced tech professionals.

The latest Colliers Global Tech Talent Market Report places six Indian cities on the global list, underscoring the country's growing influence in the tech sector alongside China. The report analysed over 200 markets, considering factors such as talent density, infrastructure, capital availability, and cost-efficiency.

Bengaluru stood out for its skilled workforce and appeal to global investors. The city also witnessed a 9% rise in employees under 25 between 2014 and 2022—20% higher than the average across all industries. Bengaluru and Hyderabad have emerged as top destinations for tech professionals, thanks to their rich talent pool, strong IT infrastructure, and cost-effective business environment. **–BMB**

Sharavathi project gets approval amid wildlife concerns

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The controversial Sharavathi pumped-storage project proposal has received in-principle approval from the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL). The project's fate now hangs only with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) for forest clearance.

Following this and a formal nod under the Forest Conservation Act, the project will receive the final green signal to begin operations.

The NBWL approval covers the diversion of 42.51 hectares of forest land and 60.534 hectares of non-forest land from the Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary, along with 11.645 hectares of forest land and 28.074 hectares of non-forest land from its eco-sensitive zone. These areas fall under Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts and will be used for the construction of the 2,000 MW Sharavathi Pumped Storage Project by the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL).

The decision was taken at a recent meeting of the NBWL Standing Committee. The proposal had already been recommended by the Chief Wildlife Warden, the State Board for Wildlife, and the Karnataka government. However, the approval comes with a series of conditions to minimise ecological damage.

Wildlife board suggests underground road extension to protect 12,000 trees and macaque habitat

Among the key concerns raised was the felling of over 13,000 trees. NBWL noted that more than 12,000 of these could be saved if KPCL extended the proposed underground road from Nagar Basti Kere to the base of the pump house, rather than cutting a 12.3 km stretch through the forest. Similarly, an alternate design for the surge tank—constructed underground with a narrow opening for an air outlet—could preserve most of the 518 trees initially marked for removal.

The Board highlighted the ecological sensitivity of the region, especially considering that it is home to the endangered Lion Tailed Macaque (LTM), an arboreal species whose movement relies on unbroken forest canopies. Any break in canopy continuity, especially due to road widening, could disrupt their habitat and behaviour. To address this, KPCL has been directed to ensure suitable canopy connectivity and implement an Animal Passage Plan for the safe movement of wildlife.

Further, slope stabilisation and soil moisture conservation measures have been mandated to prevent landslides and maintain ecological balance, especially since most components of the project are underground.

KPCL will also have to make annual contributions towards habitat management, boundary consolidation, and mitigation of man-animal conflict within the sanctuary, in coordination with the Forest Department. Restrictions have been placed on construction timing and worker activity inside the forest, along with mandates to curb air, water, and noise pollution during the construction and operational phases.

NBWL questions KPCL's claim, seeks clarity on hydroelectric classifi cation of Sharavathi project.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, PRIYA RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE, Residing at No. C-3, JP Road, Girinagar T- Block Bangalore - 560085, have changed my name to PRIYA RAMAKRISHNA HEGADE vide affidavit dated 10/07/2025 sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, CELIN W/O BINNY ANDREWS,No 15 Sree Krishna Palace Road, East Point Hospital, Suryodaya Garden, Bidarahalli Hobli, Virgonagar Post Bangalore – 560049, have changed my name to CELIN BINNY for all purposes

I, KUMAR SHETTY, S/O LATE HANGLIK K,No.3/336, Near Government School, Vasthu Layout, Bangalore South, Karnataka-560068 have changed my name to H TONWANG KONYAK, affidavit dt: 11.07.2025 Notary B. Chitra, B.lore.

I, Poonam Chaturvedi W/o Gaurav Prakash Chaturvedi R/o Kolte Patil Exente I Towers Konappana Agrahara Kamdhenu Layout Electronic City Phase 2 Bangalore have changed my name to Poonam Gaurav Chaturvedi for all purposes

I Khan Nuzhat Munawer W/O, Yahya Khan Shirani R/o No 61,12th Cross, Kanakanagar, Bengaluru-560032 have changed my name to Nuzhat Khan.

I Rama Devi Shankar W/O, Shankar R/o Shri Dwaraka No 29,2nd Cross,2nd Main 2nd Stage, Near Akai Public School,sanjayanagar Aecs Layout Bengaluru-560094 have changed my name to Ramadevi.

I PREMA w/o Rajashekar r/o 401, Sri Lakshmi Residency, 4th main, Uttarahalli, Poornapargna Layout, Bangalore 560061, have changed my name to Prema Rajashekar For all purposes.

I, Chethana B G S/O, Gajendrappa R/o No 138 Ground Flr ,head Master Layout, Chandapura,bengaluru Rural 560099 have changed my name to Chethan B G for all purposes

I, Vijaya Rajanna W/O, Rajanna Herohalli Chikkanna R/o #650/B,19Th Main Rd,Ideal Homes, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, B'luru 560098 Have Changed My Name To Vijaya Muddappa For All Purposes.

I, Chikkarayi T S/O, Tappasaiah R/o # 47, 4th Cross, Nanjappa Block, Chamarajpet, Bengaluru 560019 have changed my name to D M Chikkarayi for all purposes

I Bharath Raj Ranga Raju S/O, Ranga Raju Andanappa R/o No 18,26/1 10th Cross 4th Main, S R Nagar, Bengaluru - 560027 have changed my name to Bharath Raj.

I, Rajesh Bhanjois resident of Bangalore have changed my son's name from Adi Kashyap To Adi Bhanjois vide affidavit dtd 16122024 Bangalore

I Chandrika Annaiah W/O, Bharath Raj R/o No 18,26/1 10th Cross 4th Main S R Nagar Bengaluru - 560027 have changed my name to Chandrika Raj.

I, Mohammed Azmathulla Habeeb S/o Shaik Habeebulla R/o 112/21,3rd Cross, Vinayaka Nagar B'lore-560026 have changed my name to Mohammed Azmathulla.

I, SNIGDHA, No C-602, Ajmera Green Acres, Bannerghatta Road, Kalena Agrahara, Bangalore-560076, Have changed my name to SNIGDHA DEEPALA, vide affidavit dated 11/07/2025 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, Gunjan Divyangkumar Oza R/o D-314, Gr Sankalpa Choodasandra, Nagnathapura ,bengaluru, Pin:560099, Karnataka, India have changed my minor daughter's name from Hasti Oza to Hasti Gunjan Oza.

LOST & FOUND

I, Vidhu Jain G, residing at Parasmani Gold Crest Flat 102, 16 KG Nagar, 5th main road Gavipuram Bengaluru-19, have lost Statement of marks and pass certificate issued by Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, New Delhi, unique Id No. 7378723 of 10th STD issued on the name of Vidhu Jain G of Baldwin Girls High School, Bengaluru date of declaration of result: 24-07-2021. Finder's please contact: 7676162880.

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Free Food on Duty • Free Accommodation
9060955942 / 6364855563

GALLERIA

GET NOTICED

Grand Flea Market Presents
ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಉತ್ಸವ
Bengaluru Utsava
(Art, Craft, Handlooms & Lifestyle Exhibition)
Date: 11th July to 27th July 2025
Timing: 10:30 AM - 7:00 PM
Venue:
Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath
(7 Galleries and Lawn Area)
Near Shivananda Circle, Kumara Krupa Road
Bengaluru - 560 001.
Contact: 6364685716 / 9036658774
17 Days Exhibition Entry Free
70+ Shopping Stalls | 50+ Craftsman | Entry Free

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RAJAJINAGAR
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A.G.BABU SAH
SILK CLOTH MERCHANT
VARAMAHALAKSHMI FESTIVAL SALE
SRI SHIVA PRABHA KALYANA MANTAPA
NO.1, 1ST MAIN INDUSTRIAL TOWN, WEST OF CHORD ROAD, RAJAJINAGAR, (OPP. TO NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL) BANGALORE - 560 044.
Price Range Rs.200/- to Rs.30,000
TIMING 11.00 AM TO 7.00 PM
NO EXCHANGE - NO RETURNS
11, 12 & 13th JULY 2025
(LAST DAY CLOSED @ 5.00 PM)
10% to 50% Discount
DISCOUNT SAREES ALSO AVAILABLE

AI-generated child pornography is surging - a legal scholar explains why the fight against it is complicated

Mal content

In the legal field, child porn is called child sexual abuse material as the term reflects the abuse depicted in images and videos

The Internet Watch Foundation, an organisation that tracks child sexual abuse material posted online, has documented a surge over the first half of 2025 in AI-generated, realistic sexually explicit videos depicting minors. Some of the material was derived from images of real minors, and some was wholly synthetic.

The US Supreme Court has concluded that computer-generated pornographic images that are based on images of real children are illegal. The use of generative AI technologies to make deepfake pornographic images of minors almost certainly falls under the scope of that ruling. But the legality of the new fully AI-generated content is less clear. As a legal scholar who studies the intersection of constitutional law and emerging technologies, I see images that are completely fake but indistinguishable from real photos as a challenge to the legal status quo.

Policing child sexual abuse material

While the internet's architecture has always made it difficult to control what is shared online, there are a few kinds of content that most regulatory authorities across the globe agree should be censored. Child pornography is at the top of that list.

For decades, law enforcement agencies have worked with major tech companies to identify and remove this kind of material from the web, and to prosecute those who create or circulate it. But the advent of generative artificial intelligence and easy-to-access tools creates a vexing new challenge for such efforts.

In the legal field, child pornography is generally referred to as child sexual abuse material, or CSAM, because the term better reflects the abuse that is depicted in the images and videos and the resulting trauma to the children involved.

In 1982, the Supreme Court ruled that child pornography is not protected under the First Amendment because safeguarding the physical and psychological well-being of a minor is a compelling government interest that justifies laws that prohibit child sexual abuse material.

That case, New York v. Ferber, effectively allowed the federal government and all 50 states to criminalize traditional child sexual abuse material. But a subsequent case, Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition from 2002, might complicate efforts to criminalize AI-generated child sexual abuse material. In that case, the court struck down a law that prohibited computer-generated child pornography, effectively rendering it legal. The government's interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of children, the court found, was not implicated when such obscene material is computer generated. "Virtual child pornography is not 'intrinsically related' to the sexual abuse of children," the court wrote.

Ban on nonconsensual deepfake porn

Images, including sexually explicit depictions of minors that blend the real with the virtual, are a growing problem.

With troves of photos available on social media platforms, and AI tools becoming more accessible across the web, people have superimposed real photos of girls' faces onto sexually explicit images. Incidents of this nonconsensual deepfake pornography have played out across the country, from Pennsylvania to California, Texas and Wisconsin. A recent survey by the Center for Democracy and Technology, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, found that 15% of students and 11% of teachers knew of at least one deepfake that depicted someone associated with their school in a sexually explicit or intimate manner.

The Take It Down Act, signed into law by President Donald Trump on May 19, 2025, makes it a criminal offense to publish nonconsensual deepfake pornography – whether the victims are minors or adults.

Criminalising AI-generated CSAM

According to the child advocacy organization Enough Abuse, 38 states have criminalized AI-generated or AI-modified CSAM, either by amending existing child sexual abuse material laws or enacting new ones. More than half of those 38 states enacted new laws or amended their existing ones within the past year. California, for example, enacted Assembly Bill 1831 on Sept. 29, 2024, which amended its penal code to prohibit the creation, sale, possession and distribution of any "digitally altered or artificial-intelligence-generated matter" that depicts a person under 18 engaging in or simulating sexual conduct.

While some of these state laws target the use of photos of real people to generate these deep fakes, others go further, defining child sexual abuse material as "any image of a person who appears to be a minor under 18 involved in sexual activity," according to Enough Abuse. Laws like these that encompass images

With the recent advances in AI, it can be difficult for law officials to tell between images of real and fake kids

produced without depictions of real minors might run counter to the Supreme Court's Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition ruling.

Real vs. fake

Perhaps the most important part of the Ashcroft decision for emerging issues around AI-generated child sexual abuse material was part of the statute that the Supreme Court did not strike down. That provision of the law prohibited "more common and lower tech means of creating virtual (child sexual abuse material), known as computer morphing," which involves taking pictures of real minors and morphing them into sexually explicit depictions.

The court's decision stated that these digitally altered sexually explicit depictions of minors "implicate the interests of real children and are in that sense closer to the images in Ferber." The decision referenced the 1982 case, New York v. Ferber, in which the Supreme Court upheld a New York criminal statute that prohibited persons from knowingly promoting sexual performances by children under the age of 16.

The court's decisions in Ferber and Ashcroft could be used to argue that any AI-generated sexually explicit image of real minors should not be protected as free speech given the psychological harms inflicted on the real minors. But that argument has yet to be made before the court. The court's ruling in Ashcroft may permit AI-generated sexually explicit images of fake minors.

With the recent advances in AI, it can be difficult if not impossible for law enforcement officials to distinguish between images of real and fake children. It's possible that we've reached the point where computer-generated child sexual abuse material will need to be banned so that governments can enforce laws aimed at protecting real children – the point that Thomas warned about over 20 years ago. If so, easy access to generative AI tools - and early indications of a surge in their use - are likely to force the courts to grapple with the issue.

(Wayne Unger, Quinnipiac University, The Conversation)

BITS & BYTES

No more tweaks by Meta

Meta Platforms is very unlikely to offer more changes to its pay-or-consent model, meaning it is almost certain to be hit by fresh EU antitrust charges and hefty daily fines, people with direct knowledge of the matter said on Friday.

The European Commission last month warned Meta of possible daily fines after being told that the US social media giant would only make limited changes to its model to comply with the European Union's Digital Markets Act. The Facebook owner was hit with a 200-million-euro ($234 million) fine in April after the EU antitrust enforcer said its pay-or-consent model breached the DMA from when it was introduced in November 2023 to November 2024.

Meta had tweaked the model in November 2024. **Reuters**

Experience Tesla in India

As Elon Musk-owned affordable satellite internet service Starlink gets prepared to finally launch its services in India, his other venture, electric car company Tesla, is also stepping closer to kick-off its operations in the country from this month.

Although not manufacturing in the country at the moment, the company is set to open its first showroom in Mumbai on July 15.

Called an "experience centre", the Tesla showroom in the financial capital is situated in a 4,000 square feet retail space, which is closer to US tech giant Apple's flagship store in the city.

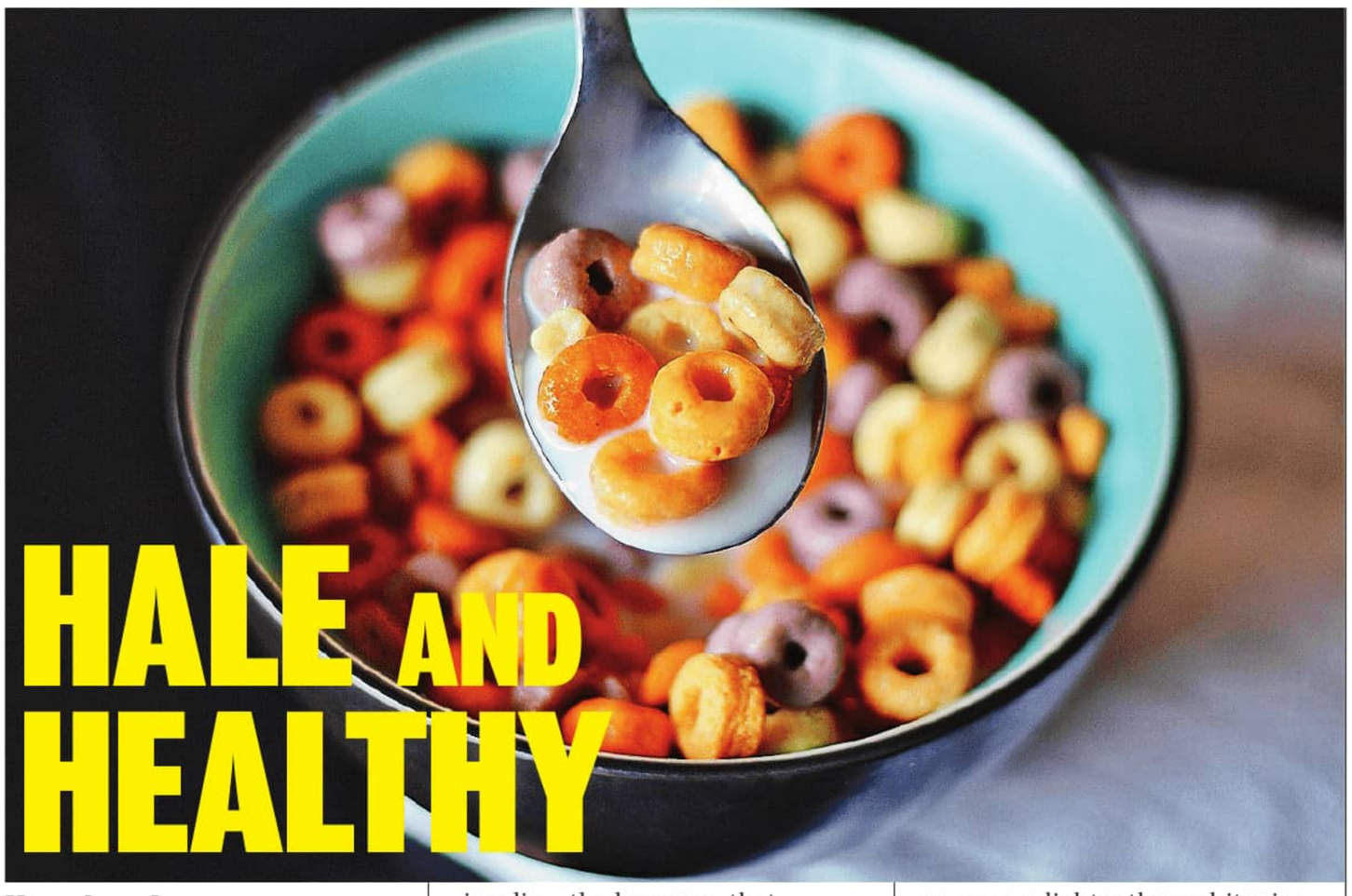
This move comes as part of Tesla's broader expansion strategy in India. In June, the company leased a commercial space in Mumbai's Kurla West, which is expected to serve as a vehicle service facility.

Tesla now has four commercial properties in India, including an engineering hub in Pune, a registered office in Bengaluru, and a temporary office near BKC **IANS**

Google discounts for US

Google will heavily discount cloud computing services for the United States government, in a deal that could be finalised within weeks, the Financial Times reported on Friday, amid President Donald Trump's efforts to implement sweeping measures to minimize federal spending.

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that Oracle will offer federal agencies a 75% discount on its license-based software and a "substantial" discount on its cloud service through the end of November. Google's cloud contract may "land in a similar spot", the Financial Times said, citing an official at the General Services Administration, adding discounts from Microsoft's Azure and Amazon Web Services are expected to follow soon. "Every single one of those companies is totally bought in," the official said. **Reuters**



HALE AND HEALTHY

Here's why your 'healthy' diet is making you gain weight

Trying to lose those extra kilos the weighing scale has been stubbornly showing? Maybe you've already made a few changes by swapping white bread for brown, starting your day with oats, or following the latest crash diets trending on Instagram reels. But here's the question, have you actually lost the weight you hoped to? If not, then it might be time to look beyond calories and willpower.

According to Karan Sarin, Public Health Educator, Metabolic Health Coach, and founder of @sweetreactions, the problem lies in insulin—the hormone that controls whether your body stores fat or burns it. And surprisingly, many foods marketed as "healthy" may be triggering fat storage.

"Weight loss isn't just about calories or willpower. It's about insulin—the hormone that decides whether your body stores fat or burns it," says Karan.

Why Your "Healthy" Foods Are Failing You?

Karan has tested over 300 Indian foods using a Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM) and found the following:

Poha, even with veggies and peanuts, caused a 47-point spike in blood sugar. "Flattened rice may seem lighter than white rice, but it turns into glucose almost instantly."

Makhanas (fox nuts), hailed as a super snack, caused a 76-point spike in his glucose levels. "78% of them are carbs. They spike just as much as chips."

Overnight oats with fruit and dates, with an 81-point spike, and hunger hit within an hour. "Your body doesn't care if sugar comes from honey, jaggery, or dates—it treats them all the same."

Even emmer wheat and amaranth flour, considered trendy, "clean" options, had glycemic loads as high as refined atta.

Sugar-free crackers still caused a 76-point spike—thanks to refined flour content (perhaps most shocking). "They may skip sugar on the label, but maida is still the hidden culprit."

What's Really Happening?

Every time your blood sugar spikes, insulin also rises. High insulin blocks your body's ability to burn fat, which is irrespective of your workout or calorie count. "This isn't a theory. It's biology," Karan explains. "When insulin is high, your body simply cannot burn fat and even if you're eating less and exercising daily."

So, What Actually Works?

Thankfully, you don't need to abandon your favourites. You just need to eat them smarter. Karan shares these science-backed tips:

Portion Smartly: Shrink the carb portion on your plate. Let at least 70% of your calories come from protein and healthy fats.

Don't Fear Fats: Adding ghee, paneer, avocado or olive oil slows glucose absorption and helps you stay fuller longer.

Walk After Meals: A 15-minute walk after meals not before can blunt spikes and boost fat burning.

The ACV Hack: Just 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar in water before a carb-heavy meal can cut the spike by 20–30%.

The Expert's Verdict

What's making you gain weight isn't always overeating, it's metabolic confusion. Foods that spike insulin, even if labelled healthy, are sending your body the wrong signals. "You don't need another restriction or fad. You need metabolic awareness and now, you've got it," says Karan.

—Kayal Arivalan, Femina

FAQS

Why do healthy foods like oats and poha cause weight gain?
- They spike blood sugar quickly, leading to a rise in insulin, a hormone that blocks fat burning.

Are jaggery and honey better than white sugar?
- Not for your metabolism. All sugars, be it natural or refined, can spike insulin the same way.

Should I stop eating carbs completely?
- No, just be smarter with portions and pair carbs with fats or protein to lower the insulin response.

Does walking really help?
- Yes! Even a 15-minute walk that can be accommodated post your meal can reduce glucose spikes significantly and help your body burn fat.

Is it safe to have apple cider vinegar daily?
- In small amounts (like 1 tbsp in water before meals), it's generally safe and can help reduce spikes.

MIRRORLIGHTS

6 signs that she is just not that into you

We live in an age of obsessing over blue ticks, analysing "seen" statuses and decoding micro-expressions, yet somehow we have lost the knack for recognising simple truths. If someone is interested, it hits you in the face. If they are not, it hits you in the face even harder.

Rather than exhausting yourself emotionally, here are a few unmistakable signs she might not be as keen as you would hope.

1. She Rarely Initiates Contact: When she ' s interested, she will make the effort to pop into your message box – a quick message, something funny that she saw that reminded her of you, or maybe some plans. If you are always the one leading the conversation, you are being taught about the imbalance in your relationship.

2. Plans Are Only 'Hypothetical': If you are always hearing "I am busy" or "sometime soon", that may just be a polite deflection. If people want to see you, they will move things around, they will make plans.

3. Her Responses Are Lukewarm And Delayed: Engaged responses typically come immediately and with thoughtfulness. If your exchanges only occasion one-word responses after hours or days, you have a clear signal that she simply is not engaged.

4. Body Language Is Distancing: In a face-to-face situation, note if she doesn't make eye contact, leans away, or puts her arms across her torso.

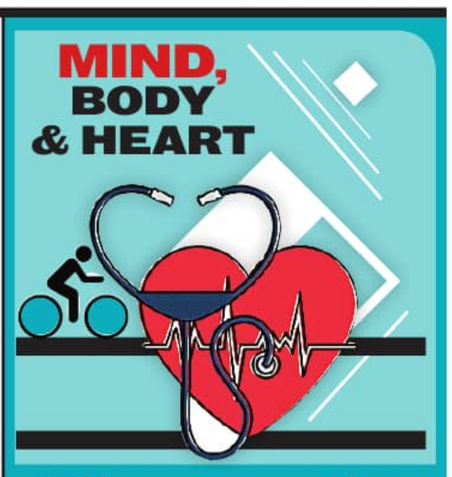
Openness is a natural indicator of comfort and interest; closed-off means closed-off, and your heart.

5. She Never Mentions The Future: Whether it's a concert next month or an outing next weekend, if she never entertains the thought of what's next with you, she's clearly inhibiting you from getting "too close."

6. You're In A State Of Perpetual Unsurety: Interest and attraction should feel positive and energising, and not depleting. If you're consistently trying to register every interaction and feel like you have to "walk on eggshells" when she responds, it might be your intuition that is speaking louder than your brain and keeping you on the fence.

Instead of contorting yourself into someone else's image, take a step back. When the right connection shows up, there will be no decoding or self-questioning to that extent. In love, clarity is kindness to both of you. And as the writer of the movie mentioned, when someone truly wants to be with you, you won't have to ask. You will just know.

—Femina



All you need to know about...

Oils for skin

1. Rosehip Oil
Lightweight yet powerful, rosehip oil is rich in vitamins A and C, which help improve skin tone and texture.
It supports collagen production, gently fades pigmentation, and reduces the appearance of wrinkles and scars over time. It absorbs easily, making it ideal as an overnight treatment.
How To Use: Massage 2–3 drops onto damp skin at night after cleansing. You can also mix it with your night cream.

2. Argan Oil
Nicknamed 'liquid gold,' argan oil is packed with vitamin E, antioxidants, and fatty acids that deeply moisturise the skin. It works well to reduce dryness, soften the look of fine lines, and bring back elasticity. It won't clog pores, making it perfect for daily use.
How To Use: Warm a few drops between your fingers and press into clean skin at night.

3. Marula Oil
This luxurious oil is loaded with antioxidants, amino acids, and essential fatty acids. It helps combat environmental damage, reduce the appearance of fine lines, and restore the skin's firmness. Marula oil can be a brilliant addition under makeup too.
How To Use: Use it as a glow-booster. Mix 1–2 drops into your moisturiser for daytime use or layer it at night.

4. Almond Oil
Sweet almond oil is gentle and lightweight, making it ideal for the delicate under-eye area. It helps reduce puffiness, fade dark circles, and smooth fine lines with regular use. Vitamin E and fatty acids nourish the skin, keeping it soft, moisturised, and less prone to premature ageing.
How to Use: Warm a few drops between your fingers and gently massage around your eyes or over your whole face before bedtime.

—Femina

 # The Office is back

Reboot of the popular sitcom 'The Office' titled 'The Paper' has finally got a release date. The show will debut with four episodes on September 4, 2025, reported Variety

Wait for it

Actor Shahana Goswami says she doesn't like to settle for less in life and would rather wait for the right opportunities than do something mediocre just for the sake of it.

It has been a journey of patience and grit for Goswami, who started out in the late 2000s with supporting parts in films such as "Yun Hota Toh Kya Hota", "Rock On!!", "Ra.One" and "Heroine".

In recent years, she has been praised for performances in films and shows such as "Gali Guleiyan", "Bombay Begums" and most recently in Sandhya Suri's Indo-British production "Santosh", which received rave reviews from critics at the Cannes Film Festival in 2024.

"I don't like settling for less. I'd rather wait. I'd rather live life. I'd rather travel. I'd rather spend time with people I love than do some half-a** thing that I don't feel passionate about, that doesn't stir my creative juices.

"I don't want to work like that. I'm too idealistic in my passion to want to do something for the sake of it or for money," the actor told PTI in an interview.

Goswami, who currently appears in the Indo-Australian series "Four Years Later", said she can live with "less money" and feels comfortable with the "fluctuations of life".

"So that perhaps then makes room for the right kind of thing to come. When your energy aligns to being decisive of what it doesn't want and what kind of direction it wants to go, then those things start coming your way because you are staying true to your calling and feel pulled towards it."

— PTI

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Ali Fazal elaborates on buzz around his latest release

Ali Fazal is setting the record straight amid the buzz surrounding his latest release, Metro... In Dino. As the romantic drama continues to perform steadily at the box office and earn praise from audiences, it has also sparked some debate — particularly over its portrayal of infidelity and emotional complexity in relationships. In a candid chat with Hindustan Times, Ali addresses the criticism head-on, defends director Anurag Basu's intent, and reflects on how the film mirrors the evolving conversations around love in today's world.

The actor is thrilled with the response to Metro... In Dino, especially the strong word-of-mouth that's driving its success. He shared that the film's steady box office growth is a result of genuine audience love, not just marketing buzz. After speaking with theatre owners and even visiting one himself, Ali noted that many are calling it a refreshing family entertainer that's bringing viewers of all ages back to cinemas — something he sees as the film's biggest win.

Addressing the chatter around the film's box office performance, he pushed back against claims that the film was made on a Rs 85 crore budget. He called such figures "obnoxious" and misleading, adding that the obsession with budget-versus-collection comparisons can distort the perception of a film's success. Ali pointed out that inflated numbers not only demoralise the team behind the film but also influence audience sentiment — with even the average moviegoer beginning to question the film's performance based on skewed math.

—ETimes

Oops! Rashmika did it again

Ranbir Kapoor starrer 'Animal' directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga got a lot of flak as it was accused of displaying toxic masculinity.

The film starred Rashmika Mandanna opposite Ranbir. In a recent interview, she was asked if she would actually be with a guy like Ranbir's character in 'Animal' in her real life.

The actress said during this chat with Barkha Dutt, "I truly believe that if you love someone and someone loves you, the changes will happen." Barkha quipped , "Do you actually think that you can change people? You know that's a young and romantic idea?" The audience laughed at it and Rashmika elaborated, "I said that because, for example, when you grow up with a partner or someone from a younger age, you are still forming a personality. You are still figuring out what you like and what you do not like. And when you grow up together..."

Then she clarified, "Maybe I am just talking about those miracle partners or situations." One of the audience members said that women in the 30s and 40s don't think that men can change. This made the actress laugh. As this video went viral on Reddit, Rashmika got trolled for her response. A user said, "It's sad that a lot of girls are actually told this and moulded in a way to change themselves for the guy. She's a reflection of the society and how India thinks, actually." Someone commented, "What world is she living in? Only to defend her character, you can't sit there and make such statements. Women are not RESPONSIBLE for fixing anyone." Another wrote, "She messed up here!! The correct answer is – No, I won't date Ranbir's character in Animal in real life." —ETimes

A different kind of love

Director Mansore, who handled the megaphone with aplomb for 19.20.21 and Act 1978, has selected a different type of script and opted for an unusual template to tell a tale of relationships. Mansore has nailed the chemistry between the lead pair and made sure they understand the characters to get into the skin of those characters. All the actors have faithfully followed the script. The locations where the movie was shot are a visual treat.

The movie begins with Akash (Vijay Krishna) and Bhoomi (Priyanka Kumar M) standing on a sea shore. Later the scene shifts to another location where Akash waits for Bhoomi. They decide to celebrate five years of their togetherness and invite their close friends. During the celebration, Bhoomi, who plays the flute, feels that Akash, who plays violin, has been neglecting her. Later they decide to go on a short trip to decide whether or not to take their relationship towards marriage. They meet different people during the trip. What happens to them is what Doora Theera Yaana (Journey to the faraway shore) is all about.

Vijay Krishna and Priyanka Kumar M are excellent in their roles. On screen, they look like they were made for each other. Vijay Krishna, as an affectionate lover with tons of patience, and Priyanka, as a possessive lover, walk away with all honours. Sruthi Hariharan, as Gouri, who believes clarity and acceptance are a must to lead life without any hurdles, has acted well. Sudha Belawadi and Sharath Lohithashwa, as a couple who prefer to be in a live-in relationship than continuing their 32-year-old married life, have provided good support.

Songs are melodious and meaningful. Music is lilting. Cinematographer Shekhar Chandra has done a fantastic job behind the camera.

The movie is worth a wach for all and especially so for those who are in a relationship..

—Y Maheswara Reddy

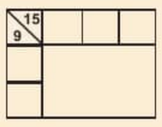
DOORA THEERA YAANA

3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆

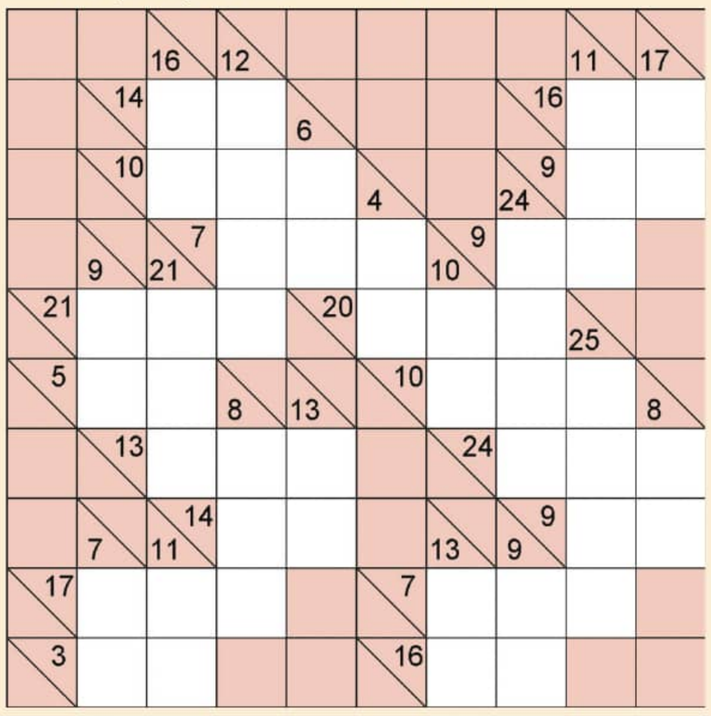
- **DIRECTOR** Mansore
- **ACTORS** Vijay Krishna, Priyanka Kumar M, Sruthi Hariharan, Sharath Lohitashwa, Sudha Belawadi
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 138 minutes

Kakuro

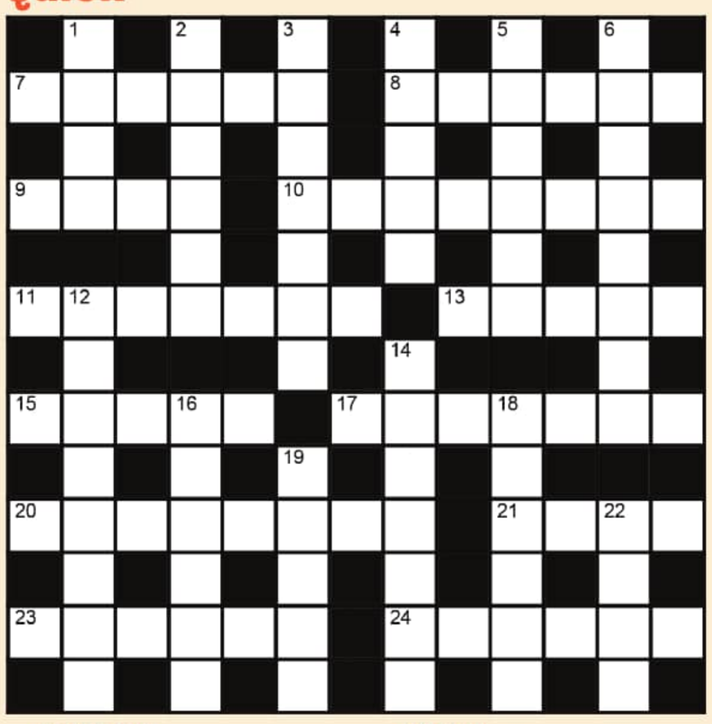
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Castor and Pollux (6)
8 Hypothesis (6)
9 In _ __ : stagnant? (1,3)
10 Talented or accomplished; cultural (8)
11 Part of a sailing ship's rigging (7)
13 Frozen dew or vapour (5)
15 Infatuation (5)
17 Clandestine behaviour (7)
20 Don Quixote's famous target? (8)
21 A blessing (4)
23 An angel (6)
24 Gossip, chatter (6)

DOWN

1 Successor (4)
2 Drooped as from heat (6)
3 Singers Frank and Nancy (7)
4 Condition (5)
5 It picks up readings (6)
6 Toy for railway enthusiast (5-3)
12 Air India, Lufthansa, Indigo, etc (8)
14 ___ Building: Skyscraper on M G Road (7)
16 Former Iraqi dictator (6)
18 Monastery heads (6)
19 Correct (5)
22 Just (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: A EQUALS D

HQEUR HQBH NPEG, AE. HQEUR HQBH MPARLUHBPA, HRBVQ.

Linemaro

You don't have a twin sister? Then you must be the most beautiful girl in the world

Mindchow

If you refuse to accept anything but the best, sometimes you get it

Joke of the day

'Streets full of water. Please advise.'
– Author Robert Benchley's telegram to his editor on arriving in Venice

Loop

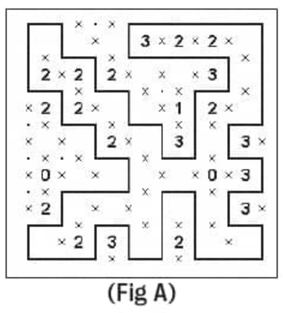
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

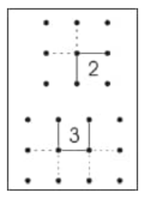
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

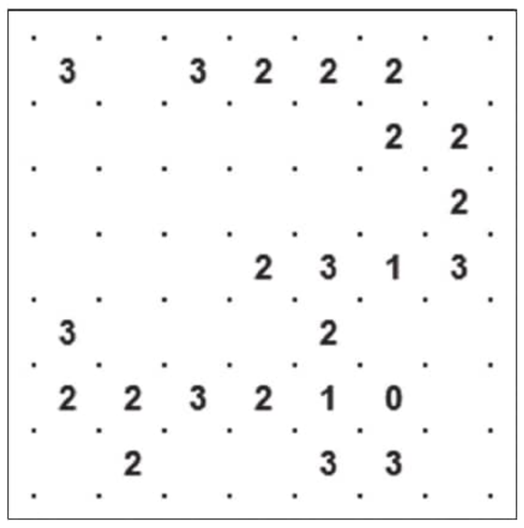
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



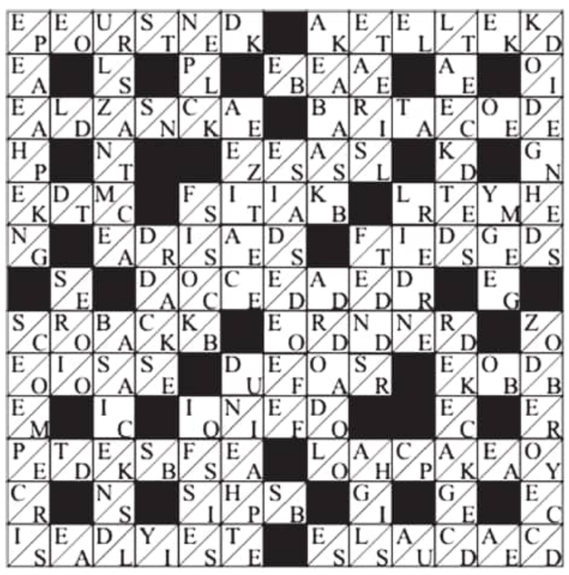
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



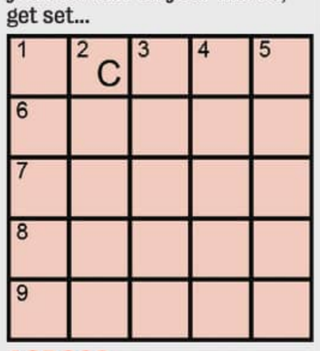
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Arcus; 6 Sates;
7 CCI it; 8 In Fat;
9 Or Fog

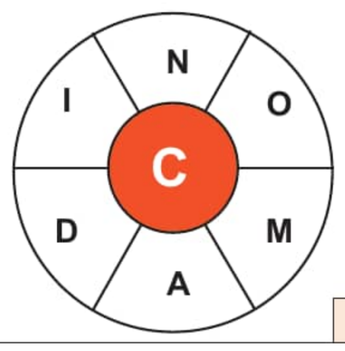
DOWN

1 Tiffs; 2 A coca;
3 Sitar; 4 Suing;
5 Or etc

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; **06** Good; **08** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	9				6	5	2	8
	2		1	3				
					9			
	3			1		9		2
9			7		4			1
1		8		9			5	
			3					
				4	2		1	
2	4	5	8				3	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 5

2 5 6 8

Medium = 8

1 2 3 7

Hard = 20

1 5 7 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Bag is different. 2. Leg is moved. 3. Woman's hair is different. 4. Doorknob is larger. 5. Picture frame is thicker. 6. Pocket is lower.

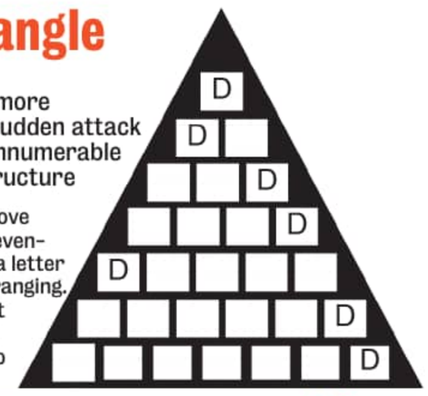
Riddler

A certain mathematician, his wife, and their teenage son all play a fair game of chess. One day when the son asked his father for 10 dollars for a Saturday night date, his father puffed his pipe for a moment and replied, "Let's do it this way. Today is Wednesday. You will play a game of chess tonight, tomorrow, and a third on Friday. If you win two games in a row, you get the money." "Whom do I play first, you or mom?" "You may have your choice," said the mathematician, his eyes twinkling. The son knew that his father played a stronger game than his mother. To maximize his chance of winning two games in succession, should he play father-mother-father or mother-father-mother?

Alpha triangle

1 Fourth letter
2 Princess, alas no more
3 Free
4 Sudden attack
5 Milk farm
6 Innumerable
7 Egyptian tomb structure

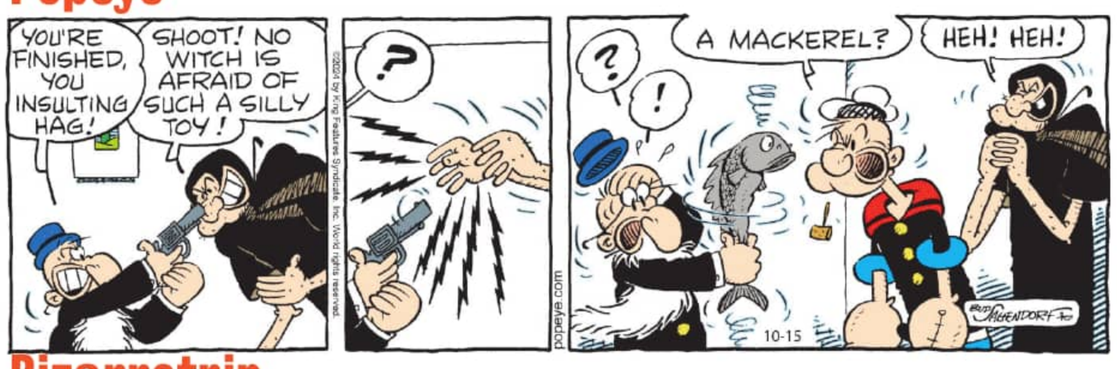
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.



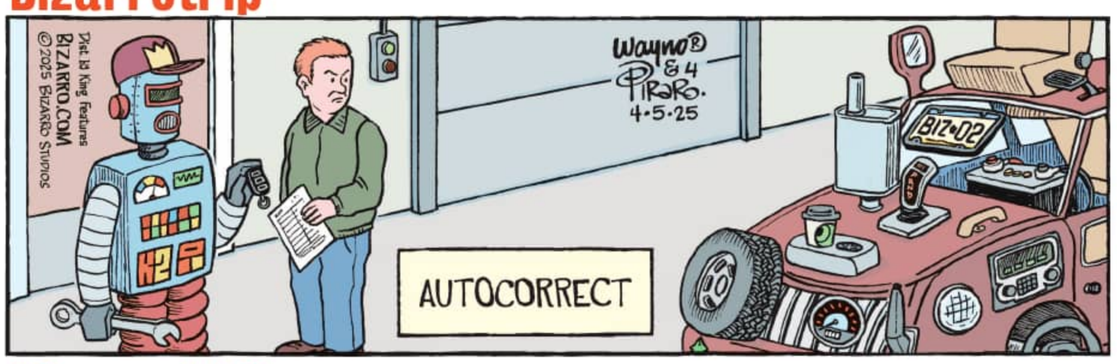
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil

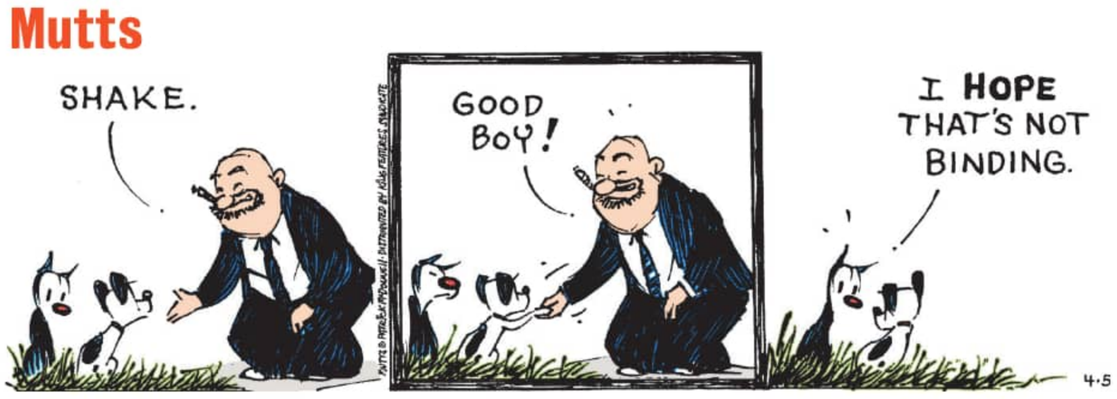
Hart of the city

HAVING FRIENDS WHO ARE GIRLS DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. THEY ARE THE SAME AS US. THEY READ THE SAME COMICS, PLAY THE SAME GAMES...
AND THEY PROBABLY SUCK AT THEM, TOO.
IS THAT A CHALLENGE?
IT IS NOW.
I DON'T WANT ANY PART OF THIS.
I CAN'T BEAT CHARLOTTE AT ANYTHING!

Crankshaft

I'M SORRY... BUT I THINK YOU SPEND TOO MUCH MONEY ON ALL OF THESE GARDENING TOOLS!
WHAT ABOUT ALL OF THOSE VINTAGE TELEVISION VIDEOS THAT YOUR HUSBAND BUYS?
DAD JUST SOLD YOU DOWN THE RIVER...
tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Professional growth is on the horizon as your focus intensifies at work. However, mental fatigue may result from your packed schedule. You might miss family or social gatherings, but emotional support from your spouse will help. Lovebirds may take key steps toward marriage. Job seekers could receive positive news, likely through a friend's referral.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
The Moon's blessings bring motivation and cheer. Productivity at work improves, and your professional network expands. With elders' guidance, new plans may be implemented smoothly. A celebration or visit with close relatives may uplift your spirits.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You may feel emotionally sensitive and low on energy. Health could be a concern—rest well and drive carefully. Stay clear of disputes and hidden adversaries. Lovebirds should avoid arguments to maintain peace and harmony.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
A day of introspection brings clarity and renewed self-confidence. Disputes in partnerships could be resolved. Harmony with your spouse improves. Students will likely make decisive career choices. Singles may encounter a special someone by chance.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Positive vibes from the Moon help resume delayed projects. Relationships—especially with your spouse—grow stronger. Lovebirds might begin planning marriage. Workplace recognition or promotion is possible. Job seekers may find fruitful opportunities.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
With elders' blessings, your confidence and efficiency rise. Innovative ideas bring smart gains with minimal investment. You'll manage rivals well. Your social reputation may improve, especially if you offer help to others. You might also invest in creative home decor.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
A harmonious blend of family, romance, and personal development defines your day. You might focus on your children's education or plan a short trip. Romantic moments will be cherished, and couples may receive joyful news about a newborn. Professionals might explore higher education options.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Frustration and impatience may cloud your focus today. Avoid major financial decisions, particularly regarding fixed assets. Pay attention to your parents' health. Use this time to rest and realign your priorities.

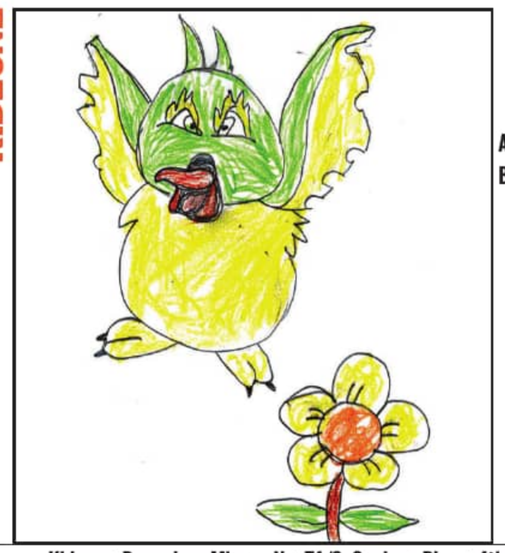
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Motivation and boldness define your day. You may buy useful items for home or office. Inner strength will help clear backlogs. Disputes with siblings may be resolved. Short work-related trips could offer networking opportunities.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
A good day for finances—you'll manage spending wisely and boost savings. Investments in home decor or office upgrades are likely. A joyful family atmosphere prevails. Singles may meet their soulmate, and couples might discuss marriage. Children will perform well academically.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
With renewed energy, your confidence returns. New success strategies may emerge, especially in family businesses. Long-standing health issues may improve. You might plan or initiate an overseas trip.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Mental restlessness and low energy may slow you down. Take care of your health and avoid risky activities. Watch out for hidden enemies and avoid arguments. Rest and spiritual practices could help restore peace of mind.

KIDZONE



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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M [(- 5^6)^(1/6) = 5

RIDDLER father–mother–father; To beat two games in a row, it is necessary to win the second game. This means that it would be to this advantage to play the second game against the weaker player. Though he plays his father twice, he has a higher chance of winning by playing his mother second.

BULL'S EYE
acid, coda, coin, comma, icon, manic, mica, NOMADIC

STRIKE OUT

S	A	D	I	S	T		E	L	U	D	E	D								
R		N		I	P	S		I		E		E								
E	D	E	S	S	A		L	A	C	K	E	Y								
M		C		I	N	F	O			E		E								
O	I	S	E		U	F	O	S		E	B	B								
C	R	A	C	K		O	R	D	E	R		O								
	S		A	C	C	E	D	E	D		G									
N		E	R	I	E	S		T	I	D	E	D								
	E	T	C		S	T	A	B		R	E	M	E							
H		N		Z	E	A	L		K		G									
A	L	A	S	K	A		B	R	A	C	E	D								
E		S		L		B	A	B	A		A		O							
P	O	U	T	E	D		K	E	E	L	E	D	E	D						
S	A	D	I	S	T		E	L	U	D	E	D	E							

FAST FIVE

S	C	A	U	R
T	A	S	S	E
I	C	T	I	C
F	A	I	N	T
	F	O	R	G

QUOTE UNCODE
Those that know, do. Those that understand, teach.

QUICK

S		M		T		Y		S		Y				
S	E	R	A	P	H		T	A	T	T	L	E		
	N		D		G		I		O		N			
W	I	N	D	M	I	L	L		B	O	O	N		
	L		A		R		I		B					
C	R	U	S	H		S	T	E	A	L	T	H		
	I				A		U			E				
Y	A	R	D	A	R	M		F	R	O	S	T		
	E		T		E			E		O		N		
A	R	U	T		A	R	T	I	S	T	I	C		
	I		L		N		A		N		A			
G	E	M	I	N	I		T	H	E	O	R	Y		
H		W		S		S		S		T				

MENSA PUZZLE
Q. Start on the left and work to the right. There are two alternating sequences of letters – one starts with A and moves through the alphabet 5 letters at a time. The other starts on H and moves through the alphabet 3 letters at a time.

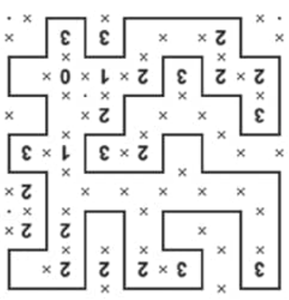
SUDOKU

3	9	1	4	7	6	5	2	8
5	2	7	1	3	8	6	9	4
4	8	6	5	2	9	1	7	3
7	3	4	6	1	5	9	8	2
9	5	2	7	8	4	3	6	1
1	6	8	2	9	3	4	5	7
8	1	9	3	5	7	2	4	6
6	7	3	9	4	2	8	1	5
2	4	5	8	6	1	7	3	9

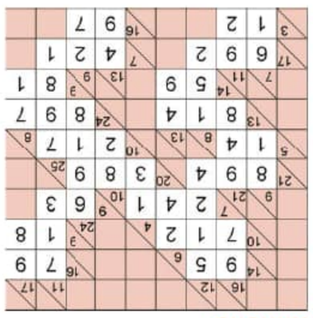
ALPHA TRIANGLE
D, Di, Rid, Raid, Dairy, Myriad, Pyramid.

GO FIGURE
Easy
6 + 2 + 5 − 8 = 5
Medium
7 − 2 + 3 x 1 = 8
Hard
8 − 5 x 7 − 1 = 20

LOOP



KAKURO



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